

31st & Pearl

Blame it on the *Ha . . . Ha . . . Ha . . . Ha . . . Harold Doty*

We don't need a Jamie Foxx hit song to know that the whole [Cheri Becker meltdown](#) that CoB administrators are now facing lies at the feet of former CoB dean Harold Doty. Doty, now the dean the College of Business & Technology at the University of Texas – *Tyler*, used the hiring of Becker a few short years ago simply to get in the craw of the Shelby Thames administration (2002-07) of USM. And *that* Doty did, especially when he played the “gender discrimination card” against Thames and former USM provost Jay Grimes, who both staunchly opposed Doty's hiring of Becker. Doty's public play – in the pages of *The Hattiesburg American* no less – served up a short-term gain for himself. In the longer term, however, it cost a veteran CoB staffer a good portion of her dignity, at least for a time.

The staffer referred to without name above was the target of an unwarranted verbal assault from then-tourism management chair Cherylynn Becker. That assault was laced with profanity and other demeaning arrows, all aimed at someone who was simply doing her job. Witnesses to the event were called upon to recount the tirade, and a human resources complaint was filed, and rightly so, by the staffer, who would shortly thereafter depart the CoB for employment in the private sector. Doty and other elements of his administration feigned concern for the staffer, instead reserving all of their energies to “see to” Becker, who was already at that time on the downhill side of her usefulness to USM's College of Business and to USM. It was about controlling the fire that Becker had started, not about caring for the victims of it.